



# UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Leo T. McCarthy Center for Public Service  
and the Common Good

## Peculiar Benefits: Civic Reflection on Privilege

### Materials Needed:

1. Copies of Peculiar Benefits by Roxanne Gay: <http://therumpus.net/2012/05/peculiar-benefits/>

### Learning Objectives:

- Students will develop an understanding of privilege and marginalization.
- Students will be able to identify their own privileged and marginalized identities.
- Student will be able to discuss and examine the privileges and marginalization that affect the Bayview community.

### Overview

1. One week prior to the reflection, send the students an email with the link or PDF copy of the article 'Peculiar Benefits' by Roxanne Gay (See copy of correspondence below). The purpose of the article is to introduce students to the concepts of privilege and marginalization.
2. The article discusses Gay's experiences with absolute poverty, and how she came to realize that even as a black woman in the United States, she experiences privilege as a result of her middle class social status. Gay goes on to discuss the importance of acknowledging privileges in one's self as well as the importance of not playing "the privilege game". These concepts are intended to provide the students with a point of reference for discussions about privilege in their own lives and in the Bayview community
3. On the day of the reflection students should share their personal opinions on the content of the article. A good way to do this is to have students share with a partner. After this, a group discussion should occur with students sharing what they spoke about in their pair. The discussion should be somewhat free flowing. In order to stimulate discussion, questions such as the questions below should be presented to the group. By the end of the reflection students should be able to identify their privileged and marginalized identities, as well as be able to identify the privilege and marginalization that exists in the Bayview community.

### Questions

1. What is privilege?
2. What is marginalization? What is intersectionality? Describe your privilege? Describe your marginalization?
3. How do you experience your privilege and marginalization? How do you think people within the Bayview experience marginalization or privilege?
4. Compare the marginalization of the Bayview and the marginalization of other communities.